



NEWS RELEASE

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Controlling Diabetes Reduces Risk of Complications

Free complication screenings available in November

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Acceptance or denial, a simple choice. However, for Kathryn Powell of Salt Lake City, acceptance made all the difference in her ability to control her diabetes.

“When I was first diagnosed with diabetes, I felt frightened, frustrated and alone,” said Powell. “But with the help of a wonderful dietitian and diabetes nurse educator, I started out on a path of change.”

“I soon found that the only way to succeed with this disease was to accept it, and make my changes positive,” she said. “By taking control of my diabetes, my whole life changed for the better. I lost weight, had my glucose levels in check, ate healthier, but most of all I found myself feeling better, really being happy and in control of my whole life. I found the need for an easy and accurate way to track my diabetes care, so with the help of my husband, doctors and dietitians, we founded Reach For H.O.P.E., a Diabetes Software Tracking System that I use daily and share with as many people as I can.”

“Diabetes is a chronic disease that can lead to serious complications such as blindness, kidney failure, amputations, heart disease, nerve damage and stroke,” stated UDCP Information Specialist Brenda Bodily. “But many of these complications could be reduced by over 50 percent if people with diabetes maintained near normal sugar levels.”

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According to the Utah Department of Health Diabetes Control Program (UDCP), an estimated 120,000 Utahns have diabetes. Unfortunately, many of them don't properly control their diabetes. It is estimated that more than one third of Utahns with diabetes are not treating their disease because they are unaware they have it. Many who have been diagnosed do not control their diabetes for a variety of reasons, including denial, not taking the disease seriously, and difficulty in changing lifestyle habits.

Powell has managed to maintain control over her diabetes for the past five years with the help of her family, diabetes care team, software system and her strong positive outlook on diabetes control.

"My family has been so supportive and active in my care," said Powell. "We all learned to eat healthier and found this did not change our "fun" eating times, but brought new food items to light. I'm not thrilled to have this disease, but since I do have it, I choose to take control of it the best I can and to live a full and active life as long as I can," said Powell.

An essential part of diabetes control recommended for Powell and all Utahns has been regular screenings for complications. To encourage Utahns with diabetes to get these important screenings, UDCP and the American Diabetes Association have partnered with organizations throughout Utah to offer free diabetes related activities, including complication screenings, health fairs and cooking classes throughout National Diabetes Awareness Month in November.

If you have diabetes or are concerned about diabetes complications, call your doctor for a screening and call the Utah Department of Health Resource Line at 1-888-222-2542 to get a list of diabetes screenings that may be in your area.

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